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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6345
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0822
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4325
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1209
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4205
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS JAKARTA 002643

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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DEPT FOR EAP/MTS, EAP/RSP
USFS FOR CMACKIE
USTR FOR MLINSCOTT, DBROOKS
USAID FOR CBARBER, MMELNICK
DEPT FOR OES/IET and OES/ETC
NSC FOR CEQ CONNAUGHTON, VAN DYKE

E.O. 12598: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [ID](#)

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SUBJECT: ASEAN FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE INCREASING

¶1. (SBU) ASEAN activity and programs on environmental issues, including climate change and illegal logging, is on the rise. ASEAN is focusing more on the environment during its 40-year anniversary and in the run-up to the 13th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 13) in Bali this December. ASEAN is likely to issue at least one landmark ministerial statement on forest law enforcement and governance prior to November's 13th ASEAN Summit in Singapore. The theme of this year's Summit is "Energy, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development", and officials expect additional statements at the leader and ministerial level during the Summit to add impetus to ASEAN activity on these issues.

¶2. (SBU) In recent conversations, ASEAN officials admit that ASEAN has done little to address illegal logging at the regional level (reftel A). However, ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) may issue a "Bangkok Declaration on Strengthening Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) in ASEAN" when they meet in Bangkok from October 29-November 1. The draft Bangkok Declaration calls for strengthening forest law enforcement and governance as "a collaborative mechanism to address illegal logging and its associated trade". This specific reference to illegal logging will be the first for such a high-level ASEAN meeting. ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) prepared and reviewed the draft at their 10th Meeting in Vientiane, Lao PDR, during July 2007, following discussions on the topic the year before in Bali.

¶3. (U) The Joint Communique of the 40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Manila, July 29-30, 2007, included strong language on the environment and climate change. The Communique anticipated ASEAN leaders signing a "Declaration on Environmental Sustainability" at November's Summit. It also acknowledged a proposed "Singapore Declaration on the Environment" that Leaders will issue during the 3rd East Asia Summit (EAS) in Singapore this November, and called on the international community to support a successful COP 13. These statements could incorporate common positions on climate change issues in advance of COP 13. Ministers at the 10th Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Bangkok, September 5-7, reiterated these points, noting that the Singapore Declaration will be on climate change, energy and the environment.

¶4. (SBU) ASEAN officials point out that concrete action on issues often gathers momentum only after ASEAN ministers or leaders make these sorts of declarations. By doing so, they provide the

necessary public political backing for regional initiatives and programs. In this context, ASEAN and Government of Indonesia (GOI) officials have recently noted that initiating a regional process or dialogue on illegal logging could be easier after this coming November, in apparent reference to the Bangkok Declaration and other similar political statements at the ASEAN Summit and EAS (reftel A).

A Singaporean diplomat in Jakarta told us that the GOI has not yet approached Singapore or ASEAN for specific support on COP 13 or initiatives like the "Forestry Eight" or Coral Triangle Initiative (reftel B and C). He noted that this could change during and immediately following the upcoming summits in Singapore, where Indonesia could start to lobby for ASEAN support for specific climate change and forestry policies.

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